From: Rob Semmel
To: SpaceXBocaChica
Subject: Comments for the Public Scoping Period
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Review for continuing operations at the SpaceX Boca Chica facility in Texas.

My interest in the project stems from a lifelong interest in the US Space Program. I remember watching as Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. That inspiring moment helped guide me into a career in metallurgical engineering. I closely followed the Space Shuttle and ISS programs that are/were great achievements for the USA. The technology gained from these programs is hard to fathom. But more importantly, the quest for discovery and the potential for human experiences beyond Earth were made real.

I do not have a background in environmental sciences so I am not qualified to say whether or not SpaceX has the technical capacity to operate in Boca Chica in an environmentally legal and conscientious way. However, I do feel confident that SpaceX has shown due respect to the wetlands and coastal area in their work so far. Frankly, setting up the Starship manufacturing, testing, and flight operations anywhere in the US presents a significant challenge. But Boca Chica may be the near ideal location for this enterprise. The location is quite isolated, near the coast, and most importantly, close to the equator. There just aren't many other viable choices that offer all that Boca Chica has. While there may be a select few alternative locations, I'd bet that the environmental factors and public acceptance would perhaps pose a bigger challenge to success.

I defer to the environmental experts to discuss how the impact can be minimized. My thoughts on this Public Scope are more centered on the need for this program to continue in order to serve the great interests of the United States, it's citizens, and the human race as a whole.

SpaceX has clearly stated what their goal is...to create the technology to allow humans to live off planet Earth. While many may see this as an exercise in futility, SpaceX has set a clear path to start the journey. Like it or not, sooner or later, the people of planet Earth will need to leave and expand into other places in space in order for the human race to survive. Earth has an expiration date. While it may (or may not) be many many years away, someone needs to get a plan together to make it happen. At this point, SpaceX is the only enterprise on Earth that is taking on this exceptionally difficult challenge.

With all due respect to the other aerospace companies around the world, I don't believe they have the will or courage to take on this challenge. Financing is certainly a big reason, but I think the lack of vision and focus is a bigger obstacle for them. Elon Musk and his team are demonstrating in very tangible ways that they are committed. While NASA can assist, they are clearly being dragged forward by SpaceX.

In my view, the FAA, EPA, Fish and Game, and all other government agencies should acknowledge the significant achievement and aspirations of SpaceX and work with them to drive this important project forward. Creating roadblocks and setbacks is not in the best long term interests of the USA. Leading in space technology is one positive we have enjoyed over the last 50 years. To slow down progress now will certainly allow other nations to catch up.

and even take the lead.

I am not saying to just let SpaceX do whatever they want in Boca Chica. I am asking that they be given every opportunity to succeed. They have shown they can compromise. They have shown that they can innovate. They have shown that they value human life. While our government agencies have real responsibilities to the environment and the preservation of our great country's natural resources, I believe that they should also work in partnership with SpaceX to make the Boca Chica facility the best it can be. Certainly there will be some impact. But the broader interests of national security and technological leadership should be balanced with any potential environmental impact.

No other government or company is taking such impressive actions to facilitate the potential future existence of the human race than Space Explorations Technologies.
Our government agencies should absolutely work constructively with them and not against them.

Respectfully,
Rob Semmel
Dyersburg, Tennessee